

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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R 251300Z JUL 78
FM USMISSION USNATO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3046
SECDEF WASHDC
INFO AMEMBASSY MADRID
CINCLANT NORFOLK VA
USNMR SHAPE BE
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 USNATO 07140

E.O. 11652: NA
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SUBJECT: SPAIN AND NATO
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1. THERE FOLLOWS IN PARAGRAPH 2 BELOW THE TEXT OF AN
ARTICLE WHICH APPEARED IN THE JULY 21, 1978 EDITION OF
ATLANTIC NEWS. ITEM FORWARDED FOR INFORMATION.

2. BEGIN TEXT:

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TITLE: 1979 WILL BE THE KEY YEAR FOR SPAIN JOINING NATO

(A.N.-N.A.) - AFTER TWO DAYS OF TALKS IN BELGIUM WITH
ALLIANCE POLITICAL AND MILITARY LEADERS, MR JAVIER
RUPEREZ, SECRETARY FOR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS IN THE SPANISH
PRIME MINISTER'S PARTY, THOUGHT THAT THE DECISION CONCERN-
ING SPAIN'S JOINING NATO WOULD BE KNOWN IN 1979.

"1979 WILL BE THE YEAR OF THE DECISION AND, I HOPE, A
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DECISION IN FAVOUR OF SPAIN'S JOINING NATO," HE TOLD THE
PRESS ON WEDNESDAY IN BRUSSELS. FURTHERMORE, THE SPANISH
GOVERNMENT WILL EASILY BE ABLE TO TAKE ON THE COST OF
JOINING, HE ADDED. HE CALCULATED THIS TO BE 2.7 PERCENT OF
SPAIN'S CURRENT DEFENCE BUDGET (FIXED COSTS), WHICH WILL
MEAN AN INCREASE OF ABOUT 65 MILLION DOLLARS IN THE
BUDGET, HE SAID.

THE ACCESSION COSTS WILL NEVERTHELESS BE COMPENSATED BY ADVANTAGES IN OTHER SECTORS SUCH AS PARTICIPATION BY SPANISH INDUSTRIES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF DEFENCE SYSTEMS WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF A EUROPEAN COOPERATION IN ARMAMENTS, AND MODERNISATION OF THE DEFENCE INFRASTRUCTURE AND THE SPANISH FORCES, MR RUPEREZ FELT.

IN THIS RESPECT, MR RUPEREZ ADDED THAT SPAIN HAS ALREADY STARTED ON A PLAN TO MODERNISE ITS ARMED FORCES, WHICH WILL END IN 1985, AND THAT WITHIN THIS MODERNISATION SCHEME, "ACCOUNT HAS ALREADY BEEN TAKEN OF ANY REQUIREMENTS REGARDING SPAIN'S JOINING NATO".

EXPLAINING WHY HE CITED NEXT YEAR AS THE DECISIVE YEAR AS REGARDS HIS COUNTRY'S MEMBERSHIP OF THE ATLANTIC ORGANISATION, MR RUPEREZ SAID THAT EVERYTHING DEPENDS ON THE PARLIAMENTARY CALENDAR. THE NEW SPANISH CONSTITUTION WILL BE PUT TO A REFERENDUM AROUND THE END OF OCTOBER AND AFTER THAT THERE WILL BE ANOTHER DELAY UNTIL THE LOCAL ELECTIONS HAVE TAKEN PLACE THREE MONTHS LATER BEFORE THE QUESTION OF NATO MEMBERSHIP CAN BE DEBATED IN THE PARLIAMENT.

IN THE MEANTIME, HE HOPES THAT THERE WILL BE CONTACTS BETWEEN MADRID AND NATO SO THAT "ALL THE DATA NECESSARY FOR GIVING A CLEAR PICTURE OF SPAIN'S ACCESSION" TO THE UNCLASSIFIED

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PARLIAMENT CAN BE COMPILED. IN MORE DETAIL, HE SAID THAT "THE TECHNICAL TEAMS SHOULD BE FORMED WITHIN A FEW MONTHS" SO THAT "THE DEBATE CAN AVAIL ITSELF OF ALL THE NECESSARY DETAILS".

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MR RUPEREZ' MEETINGS WITH THE ALLIANCE LEADERS - THE FIRST DIRECT CONTACTS BETWEEN NATO AND THE SPANISH PRIME MINISTER, ADOLFO SUAREZ' PARTY, (DEMOCRATIC UNION OF THE CENTRE) - STARTED ON MONDAY AFTERNOON AT SHAPE, ALLIED MILITARY HEADQUARTERS, WITH GENERAL HAIG, (SACEUR), AND OTHER HIGH RANKING OFFICERS. "THE PROBLEMS OF TECHNICAL AND BUDGETARY DETAILS WERE OUTLINED" WITH REGARD TO SPAIN'S MEMBERSHIP, MR RUPEREZ SAID.

AS REGARDS THE TALKS ON "POLITICAL AND CIVIL ASPECTS" OF THE ALLIANCE WHICH HE HAD ON TUESDAY MORNING AT THE NATO HEADQUARTERS IN BRUSSELS WITH THE SECRETARY GENERAL, MR LUNS, MR RUPEREZ EXPLAINED THAT THESE DISCUSSIONS WERE MAINLY FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES SO AS TO GIVE HIM A "GENERAL IDEA" OF THE ALLIANCE'S POLITICAL SITUATION.

ON THE WHOLE, ACCORDING TO THE SPANISH ENVOY, "MESSRS LUNS

AND HAIG TOLD ME SEVERAL TIMES THAT THE ALLIANCE WOULD LOOK UPON SPAIN'S ENTRY INTO NATO WITH SATISFACTION" BUT, HE ADDED, THE ALLIANCE CAN DO NOTHING TO PUSH THE SPANISH PEOPLE IN THIS DIRECTION SINCE IT IS UP TO THE SPANISH PEOPLE TO MAKE THE FINAL DECISION.

IN REPLY TO THE QUESTION AS TO WHETHER SPAIN WOULD ALLOW NUCLEAR WEAPONS ON ITS TERRITORY ONCE IT WERE A MEMBER OF NATO, MR RUPEREZ SAID THAT THE DECISION WOULD PROBABLY BE NEGATIVE ALTHOUGH THERE IS STILL NO "BLUE-PRINT" CONCERN-

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ING SPAIN'S POSSIBLE PARTICIPATION IN NATO.

WE WOULD RECALL THAT UNDER THE TERMS OF THE HISPANO-AMERICAN FIVE YEAR TREATY (1976-1981) ON DEFENCE COOPERATION, THE UNITED STATES WILL WITHDRAW THEIR NUCLEAR WEAPONS FROM SPAIN IN 1979.

FINALLY, MR RUPEREZ SPOKE OF THE "PSYCHOLOGICAL, POLITICAL, ETC, PRESSURES" ON THE PART OF THE SOVIET UNION, TRYING TO "INTOXICATE" SPANISH PUBLIC OPINION INTO MOVING TOWARDS NON-ALIGNMENT. "THE ECONOMIC ADVANTAGES WHICH SPAIN WOULD HAVE IF IT DID NOT JOIN NATO ARE POINTED OUT TO US. THEY (THE SOVIETS) ARE PUSHING HARD, BUT OUR NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE AND OUR FREE CHOICE SHOULD NOT BE COMPROMISED BY SOVIET PRESSURES OR THREATS", MR RUPEREZ SAID.

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THE DEMOCRATIC UNION OF THE CENTRE IS, ACCORDING TO MR
RUPEREZ "VERY MUCH IN FAVOUR" OF SPAIN'S JOINING. NATO,
FOR ITS PART, SEES THIS MEMBERSHIP AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO
STRENGTHEN ITS SOUTH WEST FLANK SINCE SPAIN HAS ARMED
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FORCES TALLING 309,000 PERSONS FOR A POPULATION OF
36 MILLIONS.

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